HAMILTON, 30th June, 1857.

TO THE WORLD:

Mark the literary attainments of the Rev. Robert Irvine, D. D., Minister of Knox's Church, ("Free Presbyterian") Hamilton, shewn in the following letter, copied from the *Globe* newspaper of 22nd Instant:—

SUNDAY LABOUR—SYNOD DEBATE.

(*To the Editor of the Globe.*)

SIR,—In your issue of yesterday I find one or two statements reported in my speech on the Sabbath question, at our late meeting of Synod, in which I am liable to be misunderstood, and of which I beg room for a very brief explanation.

In speaking of the *comparative* amount of Sabbath labour in the country, I wished to show that there was a greater average amount of Sabbath desecration on "each" (not "one") Lord's day of the fifty-two in connexion with the Railroads alone, than in connexion with the postal and canal departments taken together. Such was my meaning, and I apprehend statistics may be found to establish such a position.

Again, in speaking of the Great Western Railroad, I find the following sentence—"All wood traffic is then carried on, and the accumulated freight is conveyed over the road on that day." The sentence I meant to utter was—"All the accumulated wood and freight trains of the week are conveyed to their destination on the Lord's day," for which statement I have good authority.

Since our meeting of Synod, I have learned, with much pleasure from Mr. Millan, Superintendent of the Wood Department, that he has always discontinued Sabbath traffic in his own Department, and that since the Desjardines Canal disaster, Sabbath traffic in general has been much diminished along the line. And I sincerely hope that the Company will soon find themselves in a position to suppress all work, both as regards repairs and running of trains on the Christian Sabbath.

Hoping that you will excuse this intrusion,

I am,

Yours, very faithfully,

R. IRVINE.

Hamilton, June 19, 1857.

Also, in the following letter, copied from the *Globe* Newspaper of 26th Instant:

SUNDAY TRAFFIC—SYNOD DEBATE.

(*To the Editor of the Globe.*)

SIR,—As my note in your issue of the 22nd inst. has not proved sufficiently explicit in the allusion it makes to Mr. McMillan, the Superintendent of the Wood Department in the Great Western Railway, I hope you will pardon this additional note.

When I penned my letter of the 19th inst., I was so certain that a letter in my possession from Mr. Brydges made reference to both wood and freight that I did not turn it up, which I ought to have done; but on since referring to it, I find that it only mentions freight as being carried along the line on the Lord's day.

I rejoice to find that I was mistaken in reference to the wood traffic, and beg to say, with all sincerity, that I am gladdened by the assurance on Mr. McMillan's part that he has never been in the habit of despatching wood trains on the Lord's day; which fact, had I known it, I would have certainly mentioned in my speech, but now assure Mr. McMillan that he was not before my mind when I delivered that part of the speech which has given him offence.

I am,

Dear Sir,

Yours, very faithfully,

R. IRVINE.

Hamilton, 25th June, 1857.

In respect to his first letter:

Note, first,—The expression, "greater average," and consider what is an average. An average is simply a mean proportion, made out of unequal sums or quantities. Thus, if A loses 5s, B 6s, and C 7s, the *gross* amount is 18s, the *average* 6s. How then there can be two averages of one and the same gross amount, composed of several smaller amounts, as the Rev. R. Irvine alleges by his expression, "*greater* average," is certainly somewhat difficult to understand.

Note, second,—He says, there is a "greater average amount of Sabbath desecration on "each" (not "one") Lord's day of the fifty-two, in connexion with the Railroads alone, than in connexion with the postal and canal departments taken together." It is very perceptible to every person, of even very scanty education, that the *gross* "amount of Sabbath desecration on *each* Lord's day, in connexion with the Railroads alone," may, or may not be greater, than in connexion with the postal and canal departments taken together." And also, that there can be an average taken of the "amount of desecration" on several Sabbaths, "in connexion with the Railways;" and compared with the average taken of a like period of time, of the "amount of desecration, in connexion with the postal and canal departments taken together." But certainly, there cannot be an average on "one" day, or, as he "meant to utter,"' on "each day."—For it must always be borne in mind, that it is the period of time here, not the number of Railways, nor the canal and postal departments, (the latter being, to use his language, "taken together," and therefore, so must the Railways,) by which it is to be determined which of the terms, "average" or "gross," is the proper one.

Note, Third,—He says, "all the accumulated wood and freight trains of the week are conveyed to their destination on the Lord's day." This is what he "meant to utter" in the Synod; to which he adds, "for which statement I have good authority;" this last sentence has reference to the time he was writing his letter. And in the very next sentence, he says, in

respect of Mr. McMillan, the Wood Superintendant, "that he has *always discontinued* Sabbath traffic in his own Department." There is, here, either a very gross contradiction of himself; or else, he is determined to "shew up" Mr. McMillan, the Wood Superintendant, in this, that notwithstanding McMillan's assertion to the contrary, he, the Rev. R. Irvine, "has good authority" for what he "meant to utter" at the Synod, which is in direct contradiction of McMillan's said information, which he, the Rev. R. Irvine, "learned with *much pleasure*" from him; the "pleasure" being evidently the power of shewing him up. Verily, a pretty hard rub for "Holy Willie" from his own Pastor.

Note, Fourth,—The expression, "*has always discontinued.*" The word "always,'" signifies perpetually, or throughout all time. The word, "discontinue," signifies to leave off; implying a previous habit or practice of something. How then, pray, could he "always discontinue" that of which he was never guilty, and could not be. The word *always*, in point of time, precluding him.

Note, Fifth.—The wish he expresses, "and I sincerely hope that the Company will *soon find* themselves in a position to *suppress* all work, &c." What a Christian sentiment for a D.D.—a Doctor of Divinity—"to utter"!!! If labour on Sabbath is sinful, it should be stopped *at once.* I wonder if this is a sample of that doctrine, which he, and other Ministers of his stamp of character in the "Free Church," call "Christian *expediency.*"

Note, Sixth,—The word "suppress." That word when used as here, in relation to the stopping of any thing, properly signifies to crush, to subdue, as to suppress a rebellion, a riot, &c., and implies, of necessity, the use of force. Is it really true, that the servants of the said Company work upon Sabbath in defiance of the Company, and that their inability to stop them, has caused the Rev. R. Irvine to breathe out the "Christian expediency" prayer, that they, the Company, "*may soon* find themselves in a position to *suppress* all work, &c." If working on the Sabbath is sinful—as undoubtedly such work is, would it not be highly "expedient" that the said Company at once request Major Booker to call out his "Artillery," Captain Macdonald his "Rifles," and Captain McCuaig, his "Celts," to "suppress" such insubordination, and prevent Sabbath desecration.

In his second letter—which is an attempt, apparently, at an apology to Mr. McMillan, the Wood Superintendant, he says: "And beg to say with all sincerity that I am gladdened by the assurance, on Mr. Millan's part, that he has never been in the *habit* of despatching wood trains on the Lord's day." Let us again read this sentence: "And *beg* to say," verily, what humility!!! "with all *sincerity*," I said in my first letter, that I have learned with *much pleasure* from Mr. McMillan that he has *always discontinued* Sabbath traffic," (by which probably he "meant to utter" that Mr. McMillan was never guilty thereof) but now I say *with all sincerity*, believe me or not, as you see fit, "that I am *gladdened* by the assurance on Mr. McMillan's part, that he has *never* been in the *habit* of despatching wood trains on the Lord's day,"—that is, he Mr. McMillan, has not been in

the *constant practice* or *habit* of desecrating the Lord's day by despatching wood trains on it, he only does it occasionally; and he has been *candid* enough since I wrote my said first letter, to admit it; shewing clearly that I "had good authority" for what "I meant to utter" at the Synod.—*Therefore am I gladdened.*

Truth is certainly a commendable virtue. I wonder if another letter or "apology" was written by the Rev. R. Irvine, he would therein "utter" some more truth respecting his quondam elder, "the Wood Superintendant." But stay, what a "letting down" of the creature, there is in the concluding sentence of the second letter; "but now assure Mr. McMillan *that he was not before my mind* when I delivered that part of the speech which has given him offence." Eh! sirs, what an apology.

And note. lastly, that this is the Rev. R. Irvine, D. D., who, at the Soiree given on his induction to the Pastorate of Knox's Church aforesaid, said, "that he had the *misfortune* to have been born in Ireland, but that he was almost a Scotchman, having received his education *at a Scotch University.*" And this is the learned University man, the man of "ornate composition," whom "the barley man," "the mess of pottage man," et hoc omne genus—or in plain Scotch, an' a' sic like—of the grocery aristocracy, the men of fine taste, of education, *the gentlemen* of said church, delight to honor.

As I do not pretend to having received my education at an University, being the son of a farmer, and educated chiefly at a Parish School in Scotland, I have only endeavoured to point out a few of the more gross portions of the said letters, in a somewhat rough manner, and have doubtless overlooked other portions less gross, which an university education would have enabled me to have pointed out.

But in conclusion, for the honor of my country, (for as yet I have not found it desirable to say that I had the *misfortune* to be born in Scotland) I must be allowed to protest against it being supposed, that the Rev. R. Irvine received the Degree of D. D. from any University in Scotland. The best informed on that subject, say it came from some American "Institution."

I am, yours,

Very respectfully,

COLIN D. REID.

P. S.—I will send to the Rev. R. Irvine and to Mr. McMillan, each, a copy hereof. I heartily abhor their system of procedure as regards me, namely, saying and doing things behind my back, which they dare not in my presence.